

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claims 1-8 (Cancelled).

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A fiber array for optical communication, comprising: a substrate for inserting optical fibers therein; and a press plate for pressing and fixing the inserted optical fibers, said substrate having a plurality of grooves into which said optical fibers are to be inserted, the accuracy of the center-to-center dimension between said grooves adjacent to each other being within $\pm 0.5 \mu\text{m}$, the degree of parallelization in the groove length direction between said grooves adjacent to each other being within ± 0.1 degree,

wherein the plurality of grooves are formed in the substrate by pulsed laser beam machining followed by etching an inner wall of each of the formed grooves.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The fiber array for optical communication according to claim 9, wherein said grooves have a U-shaped or V-shaped section.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The fiber array for optical communication according to claim 9, wherein said grooves have a semicircular section, and said press plate also have grooves with a semicircular section located at positions respectively corresponding to the grooves in said substrate.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The fiber array for optical communication according to claim 9, wherein said substrate and a substrate of said press

plate are formed of a material selected from the group consisting of glass composed mainly of silicon oxide, glass ceramic, quartz glass, light-transparent alumina, and zirconium oxide.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): A method for manufacturing ~~the~~ a fiber array for optical communication ~~of claim 9~~, the fiber array comprising: a substrate for inserting optical fibers therein; and a press plate for pressing and fixing the inserted optical fibers, said substrate having a plurality of grooves into which said optical fibers are to be inserted, the accuracy of the center-to-center dimension between said grooves adjacent to each other being within $\pm 0.5 \mu\text{m}$, the degree of parallelization in the groove length direction between said grooves adjacent to each other being within ± 0.1 degree, said method comprising the steps of:

forming grooves into which said optical fibers are inserted in said substrate by pulsed laser beam machining;

etching the inner wall of said formed grooves after said laser beam machining;

inserting optical fibers into the formed grooves; and

joining and fixing said inserted optical fibers to said substrate and said press plate.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 13, wherein said pulsed laser beam is a femtosecond laser beam.

Claim 15 (Cancelled)

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The method according to claim ~~[[15]]~~ 13, wherein said etching is carried out with at least one inorganic acid selected from the group consisting of hydrofluoric acid, hydrochloric acid, nitric acid, and sulfuric acid.